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JOHN R. SEELEY

## Remaking the Urban Scene: New Youth in an Old Environment

### I

THERE IS something fatal to the understanding of urban problems in the means by which we seek it. The means are, conventionally, the orderly presentation of facts as complete, accurate, and sure as possible, in the context of argument as lucid and precise as possible, with a view to the persuasion or conviction of "rational" minds that think that way. We all know, I think, the roles, rules, and skills involved. But if this procedure has brought us to the present sorry pass, it is ironic that it should be held that necessities of communication require that the fatal process be continued in order to persuade any of its fatality.

Let no one fail to appreciate the difficulty. Imagine a patient in psychoanalysis whose central defense is "intellectualization." His analyst would like him for his own benefit to appreciate the harm he thus does himself. The patient might sense, intuit, appreciate what is lost to him *if* he will not abandon the defense enough to enter as a whole man (as nearly as he can) into the drama that he and his doctor (as representative of "the world") are playing out. But before he will engage, he says: "Prove it to me. Marshal your arguments. Show me a fourfold table of harms and goods cross-classified by intellectualization and whatever is the alternative." If the analyst yields, he and the patient are probably lost in one of two ways: Either it cannot be shown intellectually that intellectualization is as bad for this patient as it actually is, or, if it can, that this would be the worst possible way for him to reach that conclusion, since at the very least it would deepen his reliance on what he already over-relies on.

We cannot reach to the question of "the conscience of the city"

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by means of a conscience that I hold to be in a radical sense false. It is ironic (and probably self-defeating) to seek to secure conviction on that point by the very methods that the argument impugns.

It might be noted as an intellectual *curiosum* that each of the two courses open is subject to and the object of attack. If a psychoanalyst maintains that there is no way to the understanding of analysis except by the experience of it—that, in effect, the abstraction and “precision” characterizing scientific speech about it inevitably falsify and misrepresent its nature—he is accused of practicing mysticism, magic, or mumbo-jumbo. If, on the other hand, a McLuhan—no matter what the merit of his contentions—argues by means of a linear logic sequentially presented against “linear logic,” books, and sequential as against simultaneous presentation, his critics hold that he cannot believe what he asserts since his practice is incompatible with his theory. The two arguments, taken together, seem to substantiate the conclusion of the dean of an eminent medical school: “There is no learning,” he said, “among doctors; only biological replacement by those with new ideas.” They might also make intelligible the distress of the young at the difficulties or impossibilities of communication with “anyone over thirty.”

In any case, what is here undertaken is a self-contradictory attempt to marshal an over-ordered argument against over-order, an attack on the undue reliance on logic relying unduly on logic, a managerial-type assault on management, a prosaic *démarche* against prosaism, an attempt to convince some colleagues by these methods that they cannot be convinced by such methods, and that failing such conviction they will mistake the future because, so restricted, they misapprehend the present in its most vital particulars.

## II

The West (in which must now be included the Westernized or Westernizing nations) has reached a climax. The climax refers both to personal and institutional practices and to those reflective methods by which “adaptation” is secured and operability maintained. By a “climax” I mean that point of highest development precedent to fission, explosion, or exhaustion and replacement by another form. By “another form,” I no more mean a minor modification of the old form than the so-called Dark Ages represented in relation to the preceding Roman Empire.

We may discern some intimations as to the probable shape of that successor form by attending to two classes of facts: those connected with alienation and those connected with such alternative and separate integrations as we see beginning. Alienation here means the dissolution of a civilization—not some untoward cause or consequence of it—since civilization exists in attachment, devotion, as community exists (to quote John Dewey) in communication.

If this is what is afoot, and if it can by no means—or at least not much or for very long—be contained, any treatment of “the conscience of the city” must take this development at least for its context or, if approved, for its aim. If the view is correct, there is something tragicomic about sitting around “planning” to secure, extend, and improve what is to be shortly swept away—like Roman generals plotting reparative wars abroad and placatory redistribution of bread and amusement at home, just as a double, irresistible assault striking at the roots of the very idea of Rome was being mounted by “barbarians” abroad and “riff-raff” in catacombs in the heart of the heartland at home.

Just as the city is in normal times that place where the civilization reaches the high point of its gradient, where the civilization is refined, developed, elaborated, and fed back to the hinterland, so in abnormal times the city is that place where its successor is being incubated, nurtured, fostered, or developed. And the conscience of the city lies at that *nucleus nucleorum*, wherever it may be, where most actively, most passionately, most devotedly, most integrally the foundations of the new civilizations are being in action and interaction conceived, incarnated, tested, and worked out.

Most of the thoughts and plans for the future of the city are exacerbation or mere mitigation or fond folly: mitigation if we agree to give cups of water to thirsty children while the world shifts seismically in its shape and center of gravity; folly, if we imagine that we are doing more, or that we are dealing at all with the main and significant flow of events; exacerbation if the plans perfect exactly that which leads the list of *repudianda*.

### III

The crisis of the West, the great movement (or drift) toward universal alienation, is attested to by the absence of response ap-

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appropriate to the very idea of crisis despite or because of endless discussion and attendant handwringing. If your patient, child, or colleague talked endlessly of a crisis or series of crises in his life, of a growing feeling of depersonalization, while over some very long period the crises grew worse and the depersonalization greater, surely you would begin to suspect that the crisis lay at another, a different, a deeper level: that perhaps the talk about crises or that way of talking about crisis was intrinsic and contributory to the crisis and its exacerbation. You would be forced to conclude that the talk (and the action "based" upon it) was insufficient as remedy; you might suspect it was unnecessary (and hence diversionary); you might well entertain the idea that that way of analyzing and dealing with crisis was at or near the core of what generates it. It is not enough to "recognize" and plan against the Kafkaesque—indeed, by now, ultra-Kafkaesque—quality of modern life, if it is precisely the kind of recognition and response that we give to the quality of life that is the source supreme of its increasingly Kafkaesque character. Some people, even if they allow that we have thought our way into the crisis, evidently believe we can think ourselves out of it. Even where they will allow that our way of conceiving and perceiving the world has brought us to this pass, they seem to hold that some continuation of the same or some relatively minor modification will see us through or out. That the whole set of ways of thinking and their attendant ways of acting themselves constitute the crisis is evidently, for them, hard to believe.

It seems evident to me and many that the world may be loosely divided, like Caesar's Gaul, into three parts: a relatively "affluent" part more or less conscious of, more or less disgusted with, and alienated from the "good life" they have finally achieved; a moderately well-off part, some still coasting on the momentum of getting there, but most more or less numbed and indifferent; a needy part desperately struggling by every means to get into the desperate straits of the other two. Such a distribution characterizes not only any single nation (this one especially), but the relations among nations as well. By a developing or an underdeveloped nation, we mean one aspiring or being pressed or maneuvered to get into the state we are in. Those who have qualms about getting them into that state console themselves by supposing that the "beneficiary" nations can at one and the same time commit themselves to our major ways of doing, being, thinking, feeling in the world, and save and preserve "the best of their culture." For people who be-

lieve that cultures are or ought to be in a profound and pervasive sense wholes, such a prescription is very strange—so strange, in fact, that one is driven to wonder what vital irrationality the proposal is meant to protect and conceal. Surely if someone had suggested we might graft the business practices of Manchester in the 1890's onto, say, Periclean Greek culture and thus have the double virtue of "cheap goods" (whatever that would have meant to our neo-Pericleans) and high-minded balance (whatever that could have meant to our neo-entrepreneurs), one would have judged the proposing someone crazy. That one or another cultural logic would have had to pervade and prevail, giving everything its ulterior significance and destroying or eliminating whatever was radically incompatible, is as certain as anything human can be, and, if not implicit in the notion of culture, most definitely confirmed by everything we know about it.

Thus the dream of a pluralism in essentials is idle. We are destined, I think, to a cultural unity. And that unity to be achieved in some historically brief interval, a virtual next instant, is unity under the sign of affluence and emptiness, plenitude of "means" and vacuum of satisfactions, satiation, disgust, "power," and nausea that now marks and distinguishes some considerable portion of our own society and a lesser portion of all Western ones.

I can hardly avoid "talking past" those who believe that the source of the deep and pervasive disgust, the *nausée générale*, has to do with "our failures." To be sustained, this view requires either a special meaning for the word "failure" or the recognition that what disgusts us is our success. The alienation, the misery, the nausea are intrinsic to our culture and its essence, implicit in its organizing principles, and most present, most visible, most palpable when and where it is most perfected.

Does anyone have serious difficulty identifying the arch-achievements and most characteristic products of our civilization? Surely some unique supremacy would have to be accorded our "production," our characteristic social organization, our "educational system," our "middle-class way of life"—as much a climax and a hallmark for us this hour as the "gentleman" was for England in the age just past. But a deeper supremacy would have to be our science and technology—now a technology of men as well as of things. And behind and below these are the ways of thinking, being, and acting of which they are the product. Those surely are our grand achievements—indeed, they are us in our distinct us-ness, in motion. These

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are not our aberrations, but our essential and crowning glories. Indeed they are that to which we do look when we wish or think we wish to correct what we truly consider aberrations: minor departures from expectation, such as air pollution or ghetto "housing." When Rap Brown said, "Violence is as American as cherry pie," he too was trying to get us to cease pretending that an endemic condition connected with our dearest aims and efforts may (for the sake of self-deceit and in order *not* to deal with real problems) be ignored or relegated to special, extraordinary, and disclaimed status. Our violence, both in its "spontaneous" and organized forms, I would have to list also among our arch-achievements: Mace, napalm, and person-shredding devices are as much our lovingly labored products, responsive in use to our deepest needs, as the Lincoln Memorial, the Medical Corps, or the Library of Congress. Indeed, not these severally, but their bonding or welding or wedding is what interests us here.

It would be idle to deny that a variety of responsive opinion obtains even among those who see "the phenomena" with distress or disgust. There are those who regard the phenomena as expressions of human nature, rather than our particular civilizational nature, and who look hence to resignation, "realism," or minor mitigatory measures as appropriate. These are those "reformers"—for want of a better word—who regard what presents itself as evidence of the *immaturity* of a system that is essentially good or potentially viable, and their remedy, of course, is to press on to more of the same planning, control, "education," "resource-utilization," correction of blatant injustice, and the like. There are those who profess and call themselves "radicals," who look to such remedies as new laws—or constitutions even—redefinitions of property or redistributions of titles thereto, the substitution of one elite for another (the inauguration of "meritocracy," for instance). These three seem so much alike as to appear bedfellows squabbling familiarly within the standard Western family. A fourth opinion holds that none of these views touches that which gnaws at the very marrow of the civilization, renders it intrinsically dehumanizing, inevitably corrupting of man and nature. The view ought not to be thought entirely novel even in modern times. Freud seriously raised and left open (in *Civilization and Its Discontents*) the question whether any civilization—viewed as a system protecting people from the threats of nature, the body, and one another—did not of its nature so empty life of pleasure and the possibility of pleasure that the motive for and



capacity to sustain the civilization must be in time undercut and destroyed. Not necessarily civilization generally, but certainly *this* civilization is, in a rapidly mounting crescendo, showing itself to be a Moloch at its heart and core.

The evidence lies not in our peccadilloes, sins, and deviations, but in our central and crowning achievements: the most basic kinds of relations among the kinds of persons we have most basically made ourselves. The allegation that we are all “plastic people” loses too much in translation to carry the force, richness, or meaning that belongs to it.

#### IV

If I try to bring back out of the rich and allusive “language”—words, acts, musics, postures, gestures, shaded and subtle ways of being, breathing, reaching, touching—whatever I can put into “straight” language, what shall I say? How shall I locate in “our” language the source of a *dégoût total*, a *nausée générale*, a large part of which stems from the very nature of that language and the uses to which it is put, the only uses to which it *can* be put since it was developed for just such use.

The central thrusts of the civilization are clearly conquest, control, mastery, subordination, domestication, domination, the bending of all to what is taken to be the human will. It is the apotheosis of willfulness. We appear in the Universe as Conquistadors—no matter what minor modifications we may in our odd moments permit ourselves. Agency is all; patience nothing, except as another way of mastery in rare circumstances, such as terminal cancer. We prefer in practice (whatever we may say abstractly) the effective to the harmless. Nazi soldiers were to Americans part of the family, perhaps in misconduct or error; Balinese non-soldiers are quaint or a mystery, but not serious human beings. All is reduced to the test of use—use in the peculiar “military” sense of the conqueror looking for further conquest. We sometimes smile when the claim is made explicitly that music is to be used to “tame the savage breast” or religion to maintain mental health or serve social solidarity, but in fact we can hardly accredit either comfortably until the claims (or analogical ones) have been made. To be in the world in the mode of lovers or children is so nearly unthinkable a thought that we should reject it, if we could imagine what it implied, as certainly un-American and non-Western and, perhaps, not fully hu-



man. We are the society of the girded loin, and what is in our hand is the crook at best and the sword at worst, the two being in our scheme so closely connected anyway as to represent phases in one act, the appropriate act, our paradigm-universal. The questions that divide men politically—the few capable of causing cold wars, of threatening hot ones, and generally of promoting passion—are not about the *whether* of appropriation, but the *whom*. Who is to take title to and exercise dominion over the farthest reaches of space and the uttermost depths of the sea has become an urgent question for us. Our highest imaginative flights suggest “all of us” as the answer, but a non-proprietary, non-possessory relation is outside the ambit of our imagination or beyond the pale of our political practice. The Universe is “ours”—either distributively or collectively. Indeed property, propriety, and the proper (*propre à moi*, the essence of the egoid) are so closely connected conceptually and practically, psychologically and etymologically that it is impossible to think at all in our thought-system without implying (assuming) the relations as given. Freedom is even defined as the condition under which “I am my own man,” a statement that on its face seems to imply that slave and slaveholder, owner and owned, are one. We cannot, dare not, would not leave ourselves unconquered, uncontrolled, unowned. We speak severally of “myself” and “my self,” and the practice seems so close to common sense, to something given in the nature of things, that any alternative formulation, even a silence before the ineffable, appears needless or misleading or both. The notion that your self is not yours, nor anyone else’s, and not in the order of things to which possessory ideas or feelings are appropriate is so patently violative of our ideas, attitudes, practices, and assumptions that it can barely be appreciated as a serious and radically transforming perception. Indeed, it is in a sense an untrue, a false statement. Starting with the assumption with which we all start, we have evolved—or, rather, involuted—selves so truncated, trivialized, narrowed, and ill-nourished that they probably *are* nearly capable of being “owned,” used, and held in fee.

The controlling, mastering, conquering, subordinating set is so built into our practices, our psychology, our psyches, our epistemology, our ways of “knowing,” and our language that extrication or escape by means of these is actually or virtually barred. Had I prefaced the preceding sentence by saying, “I think that. . . ,” the very “I” used would have evoked inevitably in the mind of the reader exactly that controlling, mastering “I,” engaged in one more

act of control and mastery. That "I"—overly, formally, totally disjunctive from every we, actual and virtual, from every they, from all its and the It—is the condition, cause, consequence, and beginning of the Conquistadorial set and the conquest. It is a particular way of being in the world. Since of its nature it drives toward its own logical conclusion, it progressively bars all other ways totally.

This set, now reaching its climactic elaboration in thought and practice, has given us victory, but victory of the most Pyrrhic kind. Not the unexamined life, but the life of conquest turns out to be not worth living. The stars and the atom's powers and secrets are now ours; the biosphere is our family farm. With every promise of "success," we turn upon ourselves and one another, through "social science," the scopes (whether tele- or micro-) that bid fair to bring our own refractory selves, severally and collectively, also into our service in our severalty or collectivity. The heady hope of a "social science" that will let us truly know ourselves and one another, conjoined to a "planning" that will allow this us in effect to manage that us, is the epitomic expression of the Western dream.

The disease or dream is variously seen: by a Mannheim as a virtually limitless increase in "functional rationality" accompanied by and based upon a virtually limitless decrease in "substantive rationality"; by a Freud as the sacrifice of all pleasures to the point where the will to live is itself overcome by the elaboration of those "defenses" which this civilization represents; by others as the ever more dangerous, ever more irrepressible return of the repressed moves to aggression, the genocidal-suicidal super-achievements of our age; by a Marcuse as the topological transformation of many-sided, multiform man into "one-dimensionality." These men agree that we do ever better what makes no sense, that joy and bliss are dead on the altar of armor, that we are other and strange to all including "our own selves," hell-bound to wed death, already all but dead, reduced to a single, last dimension. Those professionals who hear these voices, however, seem dominantly to respond to the vision they evoke with a heightening of the activity which is the cause and expression of the state that the vision recognizes. They seem to hold that either more of the medicine that caused the sickness or a minor variant of the same must be the source of its cure. That senselessness, joylessness, alienation, limitless aggression, the basic alliance with death, and the final reduction of all to nothing are built into the primordial roots and presuppositions of our cul-

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ture is rarely concluded and still less acted upon. We rely most desperately on what has failed us first. We cannot believe that a world conceived, organized, and related to as we have done may be finally uninhabitable, and the selves correspondingly cast over and over against such a world empty and inoperable. Even when the problem is "located" within the self, we make of that self a "that" in order to "deal with" the problem in our customary fabricant fashion. Our answer to the problems that arise is further and finer fragmentation (so that conquest can continue even as its fruits taste ever more ashen in our mouths). Dissevered each from himself, everyone from everyone else, all from nature, and each more and more from the All, we seek our salvation in one more analytic effort to be followed by one more organizational thrust, a new battle plan for triumph when what is killing us is war.

What we have perfected is technology, and it is technology on which most men, most places, most times rest such vague hopes as still stir. It is now in or almost in our hand to feed lavishly, clothe, and render "literate" the world, to live in virtually instantaneous, universal, continuous, ubiquitous "communication," to annihilate nearly all physical distance, to command more energy than we can use, to engineer mood and perhaps perception at will, to write such genetic prescriptions as we wish, to make such men as whim may dictate. The Universe capitulates. We are everywhere triumphant. But a premonitory smell of cosmic Neroism is in the air, and the cry of "Stop The World; I Want To Get Off" has become, whether absurd or not, pervasive and insistent.

## V

There cannot, in the nature of the case, be a well-articulated theory of such things. A way would have to be found to "get out of the culture" in order to find as a new person a new and different direction. Indeed, since some sort of "opening" is of the essence, and since what will follow such opening is unforeknowable, a programmatic specification would be a double contradiction in terms. The first problem is to find the meaning of getting out and the means to do so; the second is to begin to "find one's head" in what then is opened to one; the third is to prevent one's reintegration and reassimilation; and the fourth is to live in relation to oneself, others, nature, in such fashion as to preserve and enhance the new

person in the new relatedness. To look for a formula for a quest is to fail to understand what is implied in either term.

Some faint forecast of what may be before us may be provided by an ideal-typical appreciation of what was till recently known as the "hippie" phenomenon. Being "*a* hippie," largely a news-media invention, is itself very nearly a contradiction in terms; being "hippie" is a way of being in the world, of being in a different way, a mood, a social movement, a movement of religions, a quest at once personal, social, and transcendent.

The ontogeny of hippiness is as easy to abstract as it is fatal to adequate appreciation. The onset is marked by disaffection, disaffiliation, and disgust in the full and literal sense of those terms. What was libidinally invested is disendowed; one is orphaned. What had been nurturant is sensed to be poisonous to one's previously barely apprehended deeper being. These sentiments move toward repudiation, more or less clearly articulated, more and more massive. Escape and extrication from the whole fast-woven web of activities, connections, and expectations become paramount necessities, touched with the desperate character of a struggle for survival. Co-emergent is the urgency of finding an adequate experience sufficient at least to suggest or to intimate what in the self and the world has been so radically denied, distorted, and filtered out from the rich life of the rich child of the rich West. What is begun is a long, slow, agonizing quest that moves over a territory having few general and still fewer particular landmarks. Its criteria, recognized in treasured "highs," are the unitive experiences with self, others, nature, the All that depend upon and give rise to some diffusion of the already overbounded ego. The "incidentals" of location, drug-adjuvants, music, fatigue, fasting, costume, style, special language of word, touch, gesture are each less than essential, but more than adventitious. They promote and support, as do the endless but not tightly connected talks in pad and commune, the wandering, tentative searchings for one's roots and flower. Finding one's thing and doing one's thing mark stages and are intrinsic; they attest and contribute to a far-reaching transformation of the personality, whose inward signs are growth into gentleness, trust, and grace. No longer—or radically less—atomized, deracinated, homogenized, constricted, and truncated, no longer modeled on mastery, but wedded to wisdom, a recognizably new population emerges not merely bearing a new culture, but being in a new way and manifesting even in mien and posture what it is to be in that Way. For the first

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time since the history of the West became distinctly Western, a powerful movement emerges whose way is wisdom and whose hero is the sage. No more powerful transformation or revolution can be imagined for a society or a culture than a shift in the type of hero and the mode of self-modeling. From tycoon and bureaucrat-in-chief to sage, from conquest of whatever is to participation in it—these are great distances and direly different directions, dire at least for a civilization so singularly set as ours on so narrow and mean a course.

The first question commonly put to anyone asserting the power of the movement—"How many hippies, exactly, are there?"—attests to a culture lost in mindless counting, computation, calculation, and coping-with or conquering designs and devices. Not only do we instinctively turn to this counting device—to measure magnitude which then becomes undistinguishable from the greatness of something—but the externality, the management set, is implicit in the question. The question means "How many of *them* are there," so that "I" may know whether or how to modify my plans for containing them.

The kindest question asked will often be "How can we plan for them?" Dylan's answer—"Get out of the way, if you don't understand, For the times, they are a-changin'"—is evidently incomprehensible, for even the word "understand" is only "understood" by us in characteristic, fatal fashion. We think we understand something when we "grasp" it, have hold of those particulars that permit us to put it in its place. That the vital is only "understood" as it grasps you—or, more exactly, as embrace occurs—is not, it appears, except fleetingly in our understanding.

The question "How can we plan for them?" is so wrong in its every word that no answer is possible. There is an error in the word "them": It is a movement of the spirit, a genuine "change of mind" variously incarnated now in various degrees in various people, that requires a response; it is not some new "subpopulation" or sect. There is an error in the word "we": The likelihood that any intellectual-managerial "we" will be able (failing the advent of fascism) to plan or control underlying populations much longer is negligible, as dramatically attested by the progress of "pot," the development of new sex relations and gender definitions, the "troubles" in school and university and other prisons and ghettos in the last decade. There is error in the word "plan," unless its meaning is so stretched as to include voluntary abdication of the whole

scheme of arranging conditions by forethought as to have pre-decided outcomes specified with some particularity. "Planning for Freedom"—the conciliatory slogan—somehow turns out in practice mostly to mean the mere imposition of order *in the name of freedom*.

## VI

Even if the foregoing is correct, even if our civilization is about to founder in nuclear fire (or fascism) or to become something that "hippieness" foreshadows and forecasts, what has all this to do with "the conscience of the city"?

What is significant about the city is not that it is a "population center" or a place of intersection of roads, rail lines, waterways, or whatnot. A city is that place where whatever is highest in the civilization is being most actively, most vividly, most truly carried on. The city is the locus of the civilization's conscience. Failing that, the city is a population trap, a behavioral sink.

We must remind ourselves of the "hippie" insistence that "finding your head" and finding the appropriate supportive and promotive relation for doing so are co-emergents. No one has as yet gone beyond pad or commune scale in such a search and not abandoned the one half-aim or the other—though a loose commune of communes, not spatially concentrated, seems emerging. Most of these communes are now physically located by choice, not necessity, in the clefts of mountains, on the not-economically-arable plains, in the deserts and waste places generally, in the niches and interstices left free or sparse by the present ecological organization. At least for a while, the conscience of the city and therewith the city may well have its dwelling place anywhere but there.

Indeed, there are other reasons to think that for the near future the city will be literally the province and backwoods, filled with and ruled by provincials and backwoodsmen attempting to learn and do what the advance guard of the civilization is striving to unlearn and undo. It seems perfectly clear that the internal proletariat at home, like the external one abroad, is bound and determined to go through all the stages we have gone through in our miserable quest of this now potentially happy place. Those most external to our society want most the goods and powers, the games and their yield in differential deference, the penalties and rewards, the conquests and controls that are so bitter in our mouths. Just as



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the poor took on, step by step, the city's abandoned neighborhoods and mansions, so now they seem about to seize the city and with it the city ways that epitomize our maladies and miseries. It will be a "learning environment" of a sort, a learning environment to ease the learning of what we must in agony unlearn, a place to acquire the major diseases one did not have in the vain hope of curing the minor ones one had.

## VII

The views and visions earlier adverted to carry with them altogether different implications for the "life of learning" (all life), the manner of learning (all modes), and the environment of learning.

Whatever else is true, the learning must come bearing the personal signature of some fully credible teacher—which is to say someone much more like a guru than our present technicians of skill or information conveyance. No mass process comparable to our present "knowledge" factories in the universities or person and "skill" factories in the schools could fill any part in any congruous "process of education." Something more reminiscent of, though not identical with, discipleship and apprenticeship must supervene. Unitive experiences—or even precessory experiences to these—may be sought, even cultivated, but not engineered. The very notion of putting soul-sustenance and soul-deepening into the grip of a vast machine, organized like an army, standardized, bureaucratized, governed, purporting to derive its authority from the state will seem among the more tragicomic departures in the tragicomic history of man.

We must take it that all large systems—except for the supply of minimum needs at the cost of minimum effort—will largely disappear. What we have to imagine, apart from this minimum, is virtually a nonsystem, and that is, of course, for us, almost beyond imagining. To picture the undesigned is almost as difficult as to design it.

Let us try, however, to imagine a situation—"a scene"—in which the immediate objectives are not so much to learn about something, as to "dig it" or to alter it so that it can be dug. The scene thus defined (to confound Burke's distinctions) includes the action and the actors and the agency. To add to confusion, the purpose—at least the immediate purpose—is to "make the scene" (in a double sense), if it is worth making. The indissoluble double sense of



"making the scene" is on the one hand being there and (thereby or otherwise) making it other than it would have been. Digging what there is also implies a double process, but with a tremendous preponderance of emphasis on its first element: It is both unitive and disjunctive or discriminative; it is both to be lost in and to absorb, to be comprehended and to comprehend, to be integrated into and to integrate, to yield to and not master, but embody. It is, in fact (to use Kurt Wolff's terms), to surrender in order to return transformed in order to surrender otherwise.

What is to be dug is more nearly a totality than a convenient working abstraction, though occasionally a peculiarly groovy element may be abstracted. Thus if, for instance, a mathematics lesson should survive as a scene worth making, it is barely possible (and only under peculiar leanings and circumstances) that the beauty of the mathematics will be the principal element dug. The scene (in Burke's sense), the act (as likely as not seen as the funny, pathetic, possibly interesting, peculiarly subtle interplay of personalities), the actors (including oneself, with special attention to the deeper levels of value and significance), and the agency (also dug in its fullness, rather than narrowly as means to an act of narrowly defined purpose) are to be simultaneously dug and in a special sense played into—thus altering all. The special sense of "played into" is that what is meant must have no element of "playing games." To play games is to be governed by a trinity of *repudianda*: to be acting only or dominantly out of consciousness or forethought (instead of *aus ganz Natur*), for one's advantage, and in the light of other's conscious (especially predetermined and narrowed) expectations. A particular game that has to be avoided is the game of not playing games. The knife edges are very, very fine.

Let there be no question that if "skills" are not "acquired," there will be insufferably little to dig. I have had to put both words in quotation marks because they will be—can be—no longer the same things. "Acquisition," in virtue of its active, aggressive, prehensile, and possessory overtones is the wrong word; and "skills" is unduly connotative of the narrow and the "useful," the narrowly useful. But rhetoric, music, poetry, pictorial and plastic art, not to mention domestic arts, the bread and wine of life, philosophizing and testing of philosophy in dialogue and action—all these are already in process of exceedingly rapid elaboration and development. But whatever corresponds to "skills" will appear as natural emergents from activities and experiences, creditable and valuable in their

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own general (total) terms, rather than as the results of a self- or other-governed rationalized process of skill production (a series of lessons or a curriculum). Put another way, the way of life will engender the skills that enhance it.

Implicit in all this is a necessity that all men, or most, be teachers (and gurus) in a way for which history affords no example. That transformation can by no means be achieved overnight, for implicit in that implication is another: that "teaching" must, in effect, become a "voluntary," "natural," amateur, continuing function of the life of many, most, or all, rather than, as at present, an involuntary, artificial, intermittent job or trade of an essentially reluctant and, of course, incompetent few. The need, place, and, indeed, possibility for "teaching" as it is presently surviving will be minuscule. The nature of the society contemplated and the likely increase in the tempo of discovery ensure that learning can no longer occur, except marginally, in any situation of unilateral expertise. Increasingly it will be the case that the relative newcomer being taught will have information required for this learning that the relative oldcomer simply cannot have. Because that information will become more and more indispensable, all teaching-learning will have to have the structure of mutuality and the character essentially of a conference. Such doctors—teachers—as remain must be doctors of dialogue. In any case, the bulk of the activity entailed will fall increasingly to the siblingship. And the siblingship will no longer be, solely or primarily, the intense tiny group of "natural" (biological) brothers and sisters nor the non-intense "peers" (friends and acquaintances), but something in between the sibs of the extended families, small "tribes," and such that now begin to dot and will presently fill the landscape.

Very little will need planning—just enough control over the spread of cities and their ways to permit the conscience of the city to find itself chiefly outside these centers, to spread through the society which, by then, may be ready, having reached its fevered climax, to abandon its delirium and search out its new way. That new way, I am confident, will not be, cannot be, in content, organization, aim, or spirit, anything like a continuation or culmination of what we have hitherto nurtured and known.